

Choosing a Third Level College

Career Event Preparation Worksheet



Before – During – After

Choosing a Third Level College – Career Event preparation worksheet

There are three stages in this activity

Before – During – After

Stage One - Before you go - preparation

Why Visit Colleges or Careers Exhibitions?

Seeing Beyond the Prospectus and the Website

What's the big deal about seeing a college? Can you judge a College by Its Prospectus/brochure?

A College Open Day is your opportunity to get a firsthand view of a college, whereas a general Careers exhibition can allow you to get some information on a range of options in one place. Remember a college prospectus or website can only show you so much. To really get a feel for the place, you need to go to an Open Day and walk around, sit in on a class, even visit the canteen.

Picking the right course is a big decision, one of the most important you'll ever make. You will need to ask many questions when making a college or course choice.

Get Answers to Your Questions

A visit also gives you the chance to talk to students, faculty, and admission staff. You can get answers to questions, but you must have the questions prepared beforehand. Remember if you go without questions you will come home without answers. The Secret of getting the most out of any Career event –

Preparation + Preparation = Questions = List of Answers

An open day is a great opportunity to find out what it is really like to study at a Third Level College over and above what is written in the prospectus and on the website, even if you have already had some knowledge of the College beforehand. List the things you would like to see during the day – it is not always possible to see everything on an Open Day, but you can tick off what you have seen to keep track.

Check out your course options in QualifaX, check the Colleges website and read the prospectus.

Going to a Career event with a friend is a good idea - they can give you a valuable second opinion (Class discussion afterwards), as well as provide company and boost your confidence.

Social Life: - You will be in the place for at least three years and the friends you make will be with you for life, so, apart from bars and night-clubs see what other clubs/societies are available.

Students Unions: - Find out what is available and where it is based. What services does it offer to incoming students?

Music in the form of orchestras, choirs, bands and individual tuition if available. Find out how frequently it is run and how much it costs.

Sport provision is important. Find out what sports are available, how many teams there are and what the facilities are like.

Mature Student Societies: Find out what sort of non-curricular support the university/college offers (such as health + welfare – counselling/access officer/careers etc.). When at the university/college you may be assigned a personal tutor to look after things as this, so find how many students there are per tutor and find out how regular tutorials are.

College Open Days or Career Event Questions

When attending college open days it is really important to have a list of questions that you may want to ask.

1. What courses are on offer?
2. What is the entry for mature students? (Remember everyone over 23 years of age is considered a mature student. This will mean that you don't need your Leaving Certificate Course to get a place in college)
3. Is there an Interview involved?
4. How do I apply?
5. Is the course that I am interested in covered under the grant scheme?
6. Are there VTOS places available on this course?
7. What is the average weekly timetable?
8. Of the students that have completed this course where have they progressed?
9. What qualification will I get when I finish the course?
10. Will I get employment when I finish the course?
11. Will I enjoy the course?

Do's and Don'ts

Follow these simple rules and you should find the day very helpful.

1. Plan how to make the best use of the time available to you.
 2. Do attempt to research basic information about each College or stand you hope to visit.
 3. Do have questions prepared, but don't ask questions that any good student should already know, such as "What does your College do?"
 4. Do get a business card (or at least contact information) from each College that interests you.
 5. Do anticipate a hard day's work
- Do** listen to others questions and the answers they get, there might be something here that you overlooked.

Stage Two – The Day of the Event – What to do and Expect

College:			
Date of Career event:		Time of Career event:	

	Courses that interest me
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

During the Career event ensure you get answers to them all, and record them here.

	Questions for the day
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

	Contact details (Get name, phone, email etc for further questions)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Notes

Stage Three – After you come home – The Follow Up

Complete this shortly after the Career event to take stock and record what you felt and what you learned. It is essential that you take time to organise the material and ideas you collected now while it is fresh in your mind. Do not put off this stage or much of the learning potential will be lost.

List the things that you liked from the Career event, what you felt were its strengths.

Things I liked
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

List the things that you didn't like from the Career event, what you felt were its weaknesses.

Things I didn't like
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

	Opinion on Courses I looked at
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

